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ABSTRACT

This document is a speech on the problems and issues involved in implementing a competency-based teacher education program as they were experienced at the University of Georgia. The author details the two initial phases of implementation which began in 1968: (a) individualizing the existing professional subject matter program for preservice preparation and extending the period of field experiences and (b) identifying teacher competencies. The author feels that many problems were experienced because of a failure to establish a common conceptual understanding of the term "competency." The author distinguishes between "technical teaching competencies," which are skill-like competencies essential to professional performance, and "professional teaching competencies," which are complex professional behaviors that no two people ever perform the same. The author adds, however, that he and his colleagues place "personal attributes" ahead of teaching competencies. The author discusses the present organization for instruction at the University of Georgia and other practical concerns during implementation, including modules, grading, and governance. (JA)

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IMPLEMENTING COMPETENCY BASED TEACHER EDUCATION

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The preceding speakers have laid the groundwork for my topic which is implementation. This means that I will focus on how the theory of CBE is put into action. Since the University of Georgia College of Education has been in the process of implementing a competency based teacher education program for the past few years, I shall deal with some of the problems and issues which we have had to resolve as we've moved ahead.

I'd like to begin by explaining that my role in the implementation activities has been primarily consultant. Because I am a member of a division of the College of Education in which CBE is being implemented, I must hasten to add that the leadership has been that of Dr. Gilbert Shearron who is Division Chairman. He has done an outstanding job of making the program something that all of

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us in the Division regard as our own. I should point out that right here is an illustration of a first principle of implementation which if followed will avoid a great many problems. It is that to be effective a CBE program must "belong" to the staff that is implementing it. Indeed, I believe that a CBE program implemented and engineered from the "outside" is likely to last just so long as the "outside leadership" is directing affairs.

If you are looking for an exemplary program which is a replica of an outstanding competency based teacher education program model, you are about to be disappointed. As far as I know there are none. Certainly the University of Georgia program which is well along when compared to others is not in my opinion an exhibit of a finished product in action. Indeed the Georgia program, like all others I've seen or heard about is currently only "on its way" in the processes of development. In my opinion, it will be many years before we actually see a program in operation which is responsive to all the various criteria that are necessarily part of this complex process.

Now let me share with you a few highlight facts, principles and practices used in implementing the Georgia

program. Later during the conference I am sure there will be opportunities for you to question me concerning details.

Initial Phases of Implementation

Our program began back in 1968. This first phase focused on individualizing the existing professional subject matter program for preservice preparation and extending the period of field experience. At times I'm not certain that this was the right way to begin. Other times I feel that this was the only way we could have begun. What I am saying, perhaps apologetically, is that we began by modularizing current course offerings. We did not (as some would have encouraged us to do) throw out everything and begin anew with a list of teaching competencies. We began with what we had and we changed gradually. I of course don't know what would have happened if we'd started differently. However, I believe that much good came out of this initial thrust. Professors in our college for the first time that I can remember began to seriously consider (in groups, which at times even cut across disciplines) how they should go about to individualize college level instruction. These professors, who

for the most of their professional careers had been teaching about individual differences, were now realistically faced with the problem of providing for them in instruction. The evidence of this beginning is illustrated by a variety of instructional modules (some good, some bad) which were produced by the staff.

In our second phase of the program which ran almost concurrently with the first, we began to identify teaching competencies. This was a struggle. Our first step was to take those items which we had cited in the original Georgia Education Model as specifications essential for teachers and translate them into behavioral terms. This didn't work very well. We tried several other routes that all seemed to end up with only partial success insofar as program implementation needs were concerned. At times it appeared that no progress was being made. On the other hand, perhaps all of this was necessary to the processes of implementation. Certainly the lines of communication were being opened in staff meetings, workshops and retreats where with our public school colleagues and others joined us to focus on this matter as a first point of concern. Today, we have a set of competencies on which we have agree-

ment, and if time permits I will share them with you at a later point in this presentation.

Conceptualizing a Key Word

As I reflect on what happened in the early phases of implementation, I feel that one important thing that we failed to do was to establish a common conceptual understanding of the term competency. We met time and time again in conferences where we used this, then undefined, term freely. I'm certain today that many of the restraints, confusions and deadlocks we experienced were because this word represented a variety of meanings among the participants.

Now I believe most of us conceive of a teaching competency as a complex entity which differs from other kinds of competencies. Let me illustrate by pointing out that all of us have thousands of competencies which we are capable of demonstrating. For example, here are some competencies many of us use in daily living: Drives a car, plays tennis, mows the lawn, writes a letter, makes long distance phone calls. In instruction we focus on competencies needed for effective teaching. On the one

hand are those relative simple teaching competencies which may be called technical, and on the other are those complex and creative teaching competencies which may be called professional.

I will first talk about the technical teaching competencies since they are the easiest to perceive. For the most part they are skill-like competencies that are essential to professional performance. They of course require knowledge and the processing of that knowledge, but they are not highly demanding of the performer as regards creativity or decision making. Here are some examples: Threads a motion picture projector. Operates a mimeograph machine. Writes clearly with manuscript letters. Records test scores.

Now let us look at professional teaching competencies which are our primary concern. Here are some examples: Determines the educational needs of the learner. Selects and/or designs an appropriate teaching strategy to assist the student in progressing toward the target objective. Provides an environment which is conducive to learning. Determines the extent of learner progress toward the learning objectives.

These latter statements represent complex professional behaviors. They require a great deal of background knowledge, thought processes, skills and feelings. One never performs these competencies twice in the same manner. Also, no two people ever perform these competencies the same. They are not behavioral objectives. They are broad expressions of identifiable acts which are essential to effective professional teaching.

Something More than Teaching Competencies

Because all approaches to teacher education seek to provide competent teachers, because this approach to instruction is called competency based and because I am discussing competencies, I must tell you that I would be misrepresenting the Division staff if I did not say that there is a set of essentials for teaching that my colleagues and I place ahead of technical and/or professional teaching competencies. We call them personal attributes. Here's how we stumbled on this very helpful realization: During the early stages of implementation we ran headlong into what then appeared to be a conflict in values. Some typical questions and comments one might have heard during this period are: Are we going to make robots instead of teachers?

Where is the concern for humanism? Is the keynote for effective teaching efficiency? I don't care how technically competent a teacher is if he doesn't like children he's not competent.

Anyone who has had any acquaintance with Gil Shearron and his staff knows that their first concern is for humanism. This conflict had to be resolved because this humanistic oriented group of educators saw logic in CBE but could not proceed until it was assured that by implementing it they would not be denying their basic values.

I feel that the breakthrough came for most of us when we admitted openly that we were biased as regards humanism. We said, "We want teachers who both like and love the children and youth with whom they associate. We want teachers who are personable and conscientious, and have sound social judgments; who are unprejudiced and responsible to those they serve. We want teachers who are decent people and who in their own behavior demonstrate respect for mankind, his laws and his traditions." After this admission, we came to realize that there are many people who have these fine characteristics who can not teach effectively because they lack the technical and

professional competencies. We also came to realize that there are those who have the technical and professional competencies to teach but are not really competent because they lack these personal attributes. Our conclusion was that personal attributes are of first order of importance. We can usually teach a person who has these attributes, the technical and professional competencies that a person needs to be an effective teacher, but we are less certain of our ability to teach personal attributes. Here, we took a long look at our student selection requirements, at what the behavioral sciences have to say about changing personal attributes and we sought information that would contribute to our knowledge of indicators of human potential for acquiring these human characteristics so essential to effective teaching.

Once having come to an understanding that endorsing CBE did not mean avoiding humanism, but rather systematically providing for it we looked for other seeming omission. We then "felt" quite comfortable declaring that each teacher should have a broad liberal education, a sound background in his teaching speciality, and a store of experience (both personal and professional) that can be

shared both directly and indirectly with the learners with whom he associates. For us CBE includes and provides systematically for all of these concerns.

The Present Organization for Instruction

In general, our first and second phases led to additional phases which by a series of approximations has gradually moved us more and more in the direction of our theoretical model. Right now we are in the process of testing different groupings for instruction. My first transparency (See figure 1.) shows the composition of the three pilot teams we now (Spring, 1974) have in operation. The Red Team has been underway for two years now. It is about one-half each seniors and juniors. In the spring about twenty are expected to have demonstrated competencies essential to beginning teaching; they will of course graduate and be certified. There are ten staff members, but only the coordinator, a member of the College, is full time. The others range from one-sixth to three-fourths time. This team meets for four quarters during the upper two years (a total of eight quarters) of the program. During these four quarters the students are expected to acquire both the competency enablers (subject

Red Team	Blue Team	Green Team
100 Students (Both juniors and seniors	30 Students (Both juniors and seniors)	40 Students (Includes juniors only)
10 Staff members	2 Staff members	4 Staff members
2 Public schools	1 Public school	1 Public school
Governance team	Governance team	Governance team
Teaching competencies and enablers are taught concurrently	Teaching competencies and enablers are taught separately	Teaching competencies are the focus. Enablers are taught by others.

Fig. 1. Organization of Pilot Groups for Implementation

matter, skills and attitudes essential to competent teaching) and the teaching competencies themselves. More time is provided for students that need it. During each of the quarters much of the student's time is spent in public school settings. There are two local schools which the Red Team uses. The Governance Board representing everyone concerned such as college staff, school staff, and students makes up weekly schedules, determines appropriate group learning activities, defines and interprets statements of competencies, and performs dozens of other such functions of policy and planning.

The Blue Team and the Green Team are organized differently so that we can try out other ways of managing instruction. The staff member of all teams have scheduled discussions to determine the extent to which certain practices used by one team may be effective if used by another.

My next transparency (See figure 2.) shows the approximate placement of field experiences for the teams. I must emphasize that they are approximate because each team is managed by its own governance team. However, in general the first two field experiences provide for one-

Year Two

Regular Courses	Regular Courses	Field Experience I

Year Three

Regular Courses	Field Experience II	Regular Courses

Year Four

Field Experience III	Regular Courses	Field Experience IV

Fig. 2. Field Experiences for Preservice Program

half day participation, and the last two provide for full day participation.

My third transparency (See figure 3.) shows where the credit came from to provide the time for these field experiences. Here is a list of titles of the courses from which credit to provide for the experiences was obtained.

This fourth transparency (See figure 4.) depicts what happens to time during a typical week in field experience three. Please keep in mind that these charts are only approximate representations. The teams are independent and the governance boards determine the group activities and weekly schedules.

Other Practical Concerns During Implementation

Now I should like to discuss with you miscellaneous practical problems which have confronted us as we have tried to implement our model. The first has to do with modules, the next grading, and another has to do with governance. Finally, I want to say something more about competencies as we use them and give you some examples. Obviously there are many other concerns related to implementation. Perhaps in our study sessions we will find time to look at others.

Field Experience I

Curriculum and Instruction
Child Growth and Development
Introduction to Reading
Health Education

Field Experience II

Curriculum and Instruction
Educational Psychology
Mathematics Education
Physical Education Practices

Field Experience III

Curriculum and Instruction
Language Arts Education
Science Education
Social Studies Education

Field Experience IV

Practicum
Professional Seminars

Fig. 3. Credit Sources for Field Experiences

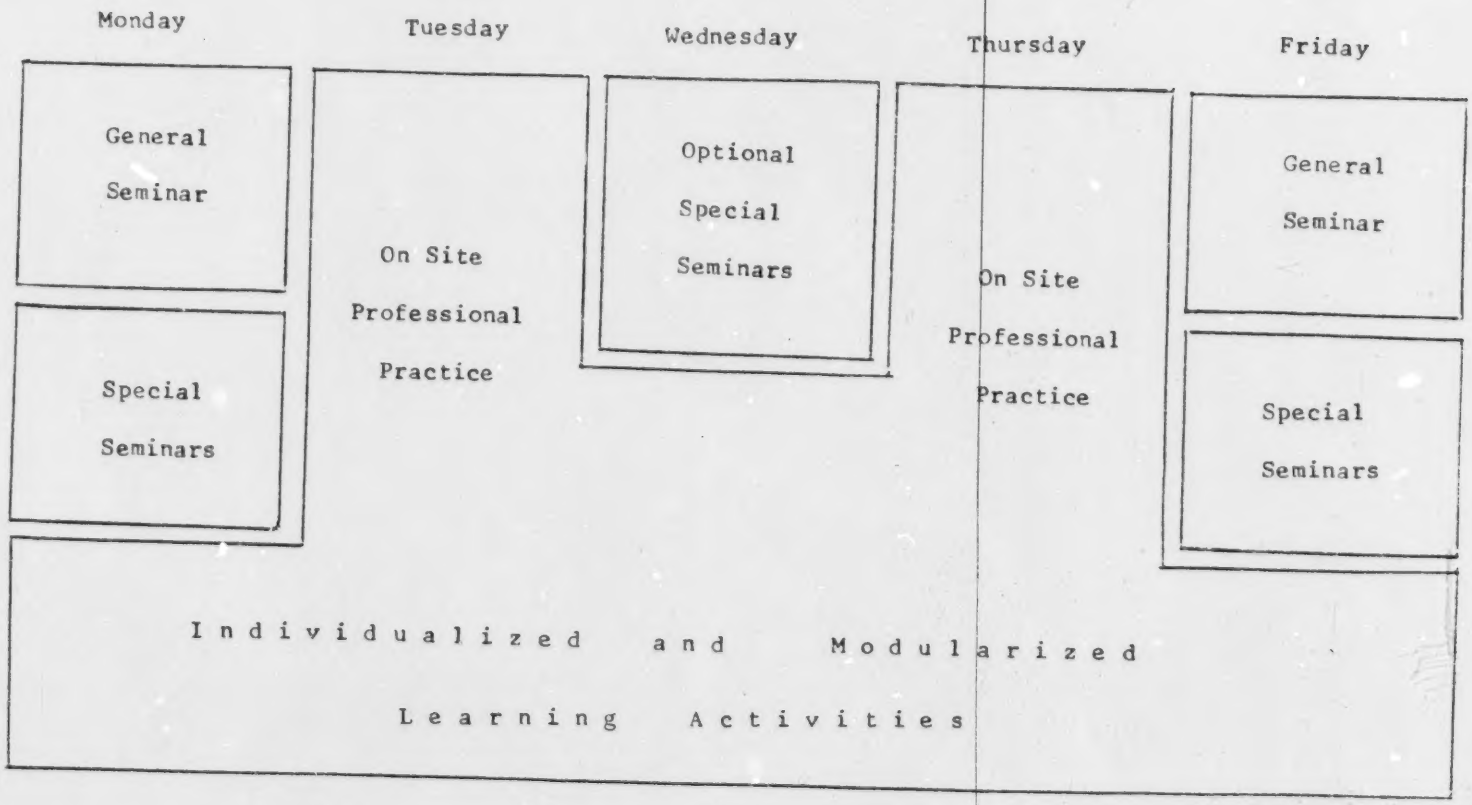

Fig. 4. Typical Time Schedule for One Week During Field Experience III

Modules

Originally we envisioned a module to be something different from a learning package. It was a cluster of related behaviors which is essential to the performance of a given teaching competency. We saw it as a sort of unit of behavior, less than a competency, but of value in a number of different teaching situations. Back in those days we were using more systems language. In systems language a module is part of a component which is part of a subsystem of some larger system. If this does not make sense to you, what I'm saying is that originally a module was simply a part of a professional competency and we felt that it would take many modules of different kinds to enable a person to perform any given competency.

As time went by the term module became a referent for a teaching package which one uses to help himself acquire a behavioral module. It wasn't very long before those who favored behavioral objectives and enjoyed systematic evaluation began making CBE a highly objective and behavioral business. For them, instructional modules became the ideal vehicle for accomplishing all manner of teacher training. For a while, I must confess, I went

along with this movement. However, it wasn't long before we found that some of the modules proposed for our students were very poor. I recall observing that some of them could have been regarded as poor substitutes for already ineffective correspondence courses. On the other hand, many proved to be effective and after later revisions nearly all of them have proved to be useful tools. Today we hold that instructional modules have a place in CBE, but that those who believe that by modularizing any given program you produce a CBE program are definitely in error. As a matter of record, we have come to believe that instructional modules while useful tools for CBE are really not essential for implementation.

Grading

A theoretical model of CBE provides a system of evaluation based on mastery criteria; thus, letter grades are of no concern. However, during the period of transition from a normal type program to a competency based program, grading looms as an irritating annoyance that must be attended to. Fortunately it is not an insurmountable program.

As it is elsewhere, most instruction at the University of Georgia is by conventional programs. Thus, records continue to be kept on a conventional basis. So, the vast majority of the students are taking courses on a quarter basis, obtaining letter grades A, B, C, or other, receiving grade point averages, using these averages for scholarships, applications to graduate schools, job recommendations and all the other kinds of things that tradition offers in the line of favors and restrictions based on academic grades. And here come some CBE enthusiasts saying that we don't want grades. We say that we are more concerned with having the student meet mastery criteria. This confuses the registrar and his computer. We are the minority. We want the change. It is our problem, so, what do we do? The student completes the equivalent of Education XYZ by undertaking a number of modules and demonstrating competence in a laboratory situation. We are satisfied that the student is competent and has the enablers. We are ready to give him an "A" because, if they (the majority) insist upon a letter grade we must say that he has done all that he bargained to do or that was required

of him. Therefore, he deserves an "A". Indeed we have had CBE professors who have given all of their students who have met the objectives the letter grade of "A" on their cards. This goes very well if we have only a few. Now, for a moment assume that all students in education at the University of Georgia receive "A's" in all of their course work in their senior year because all have done adequately in terms of satisfying the criteria set for enablers and/or competencies. Those who have not yet arrived are in the backgrounds with ratings of "I" which stands for incomplete. An "I" means "not yet competent".

This approach won't work over the long haul. We have a system of scholarships at the University and I doubt very much that the Fine Arts or Liberal Arts Colleges, or any other College for that matter will accept all education students as top ranking scholars in the University for having received straight "A's" in professional experience during their senior years. If we did that, what would happen to scholarship funds? What would happen to the valedictorianship?

I propose that we make a practical arbitrary decision with our colleagues as to how we will function during the period of transition from common practice to competency based practice. I propose that we use three grades "A", "B", and "I". This is not strictly in accord with the principles of competency based education, but will do during a transitionary period.

We should use "B" for the student who demonstrates competence. Insofar as a particular competency is concerned, this would mean that this student satisfies all the criteria. Give him an "A" if he shows outstanding performance. And frankly I believe that some students do show outstanding performance. There is the student for example who is highly proficient in music who does not wish to be a music teacher, but prefers to be a general elementary teacher. That person could conceivably be as proficient in music as some persons who were majoring in music education. Thus, it would appear that there is justification for some differentiation in grading. By using the letters "A", "B", and "I" we are likely to be out of trouble with our colleagues in the Arts and Sciences because we can call our offerings

course equivalents and turn in our grades on the kinds of cards that the registrar would prefer. Few students would receive all "A's" and thus the world would not be jarred by "way out" CBE innovation during this period of transition.

Making Time a Variable

I should now like to talk about the problems we are having with time restrictions in our program. We have been unsuccessful in totally breaking the time barriers of the conventional educational program. That is, we are still bound by the academic quarter, the academic year, by courses and quarter hours. However, we have been able to push the frontier a bit. Here's how it is done. First, we now use the letter "I" very freely. Any student who in the normal or given period of time does not satisfy the criteria may be given an "I" to indicate that more time is needed. Currently, we are permitted to hold an "I" on the records for one academic year, and this seems quite adequate for most students to erase that grade and substitute a permanent grade to show completion.

With the student who moves rapidly through certain learnings, we have found that through modularized instruction we are able to pretest this student, guide him quickly through those learnings that are essential for him and then post-test him and move him out into other kinds of learnings. I am told that this occurred with students in mathematics education not long ago. Three students showed such proficiency in mathematics and mathematics education that in three weeks they acquired certain enabling behaviors that normally would have required twelve weeks to acquire. Also, because of their highly proficient performance they received letter grades of "A". In the same group there were students who could not qualify for having satisfactorily met the criteria for the offerings in twleve weeks and used additional time to do the job. They of course were given the letter "I" on the records until they met the standards at which time they recieved a permanent grade.

Governing

Each project team is characterized by flexibility in all aspects of its operation from scheduling seminars to sequencing content and determining the nature of field

experience. Governance of the program is thus the concern of a group which is representative of all concerned including the coordinators, instructors, school administrators, classroom teachers and the interns themselves. The coordinators are college professors. The "college staff" includes instructors from such diverse fields as educational psychology, guidance and counseling, social sciences, nautral science, mathematics, reading, language arts, arts, health and physical education. The "field staff" which provides the environment for teaching experiences includes the school principals, supervisors anc classroom teachers. The "student staff" which provides their input for governance is elected from among the students.

The governance board meets as a total group when advisable or requested to receive assessment and evaluation information upon which to replan its course if necessary. In this way there is immediate feedback which provides the regenerative quality so essential to a fluid operation such as this.

From time to time various committees are formed as sub-groups to review selected aspects of the program. In

one team there are four committees that operate on a continuing basis. These are: a committee which focuses on the interpretation and reformulation of competencies, a committee on instruction which focuses on scheduling and on content in relation to the objectives reflected by the competencies, a committee on human relations which attempts to assure that the objectives which relate to humanism and social interaction receive sufficient emphasis, and a committee on evaluation which oversees the operation to be certain that the channels of communication are cleared for sufficient feedback to provide for continual reassessment and revision.

Specifying Competencies

Specifying professional teaching competencies is a constant concern during implementation. The job seems never done. It begins by collecting proposed "competencies" from numerous sources such as those derived from the goals of American education, those gleened from observations of teachers on the job, those proposed by experienced teachers, those suggested by educational principles and those which reflect tehcniques which are in accord with the principles of human development. These must be

sorted and ordered. They must be stated and verified. Once identified in broad order statements some feel that they must be reduced to more specific statements. There is always concern as to how specific they should be. There are always those who insist that they be stated in behavioral terms and those who object to such objectivity. The struggle continues and the rap sessions go on and on. Finally, if the group is persistent and stays together and resolves its differences it produces a list of competencies which it observes to be sound and practical. Such was the case at the University of Georgia.

The following is a list of twelve statements which at the time of this presentation represent professional teaching competencies accepted by the college and field instructors of the University of Georgia and the Clarke County School District as essential for a teacher education program for beginning teachers. This group holds that it is the responsibility of the teacher education program (broadly perceived to include both campus and field center) to provide opportunities for students to acquire them.

1. Determines the needs of the learner.
2. Plans activities for the learner.
3. Selects appropriate materials for instruction.
4. Employs a variety of teaching strategies appropriate to the situation.
5. Maintains an environment conducive to learning.
6. Employs a variety of evaluative procedures appropriate to the situation.
7. Communicates effectively with others.
8. Works cooperatively with others.
9. Utilizes feedback to improve his professional competence.
10. Utilizes social control procedures appropriate to the situation.
11. Accounts for fulfilling the goals of the instructional program which he is implementing.
12. Evaluates the effectiveness of the instructional program for which he is responsible.

To enhance the meaning of each statement of a competency and to communicate to others the meaning intended by those who formulated it, a list of indicators accompanies each statement of a competency. Examples of indicators are: an observable teaching act, a product of the efforts

of teaching, a condition created in the learning environment, a product of the learners' activities, a statement voiced by the teacher or the learner, or any other event or product which is evidence that the competency may be in operation, has been operative at some point in the recent past, or may be in the immediate future.

A Final Note

In this short period I have attempted to relate to you some of the considerations that one ought to keep in mind as he ventures forth to implement a competency based teacher education program. I am sure that I have at times misrepresented facts and oversimplified my subject. I may even have created some misconceptions. It was unintentional and hopefully we will be able to clarify any misunderstandings during the next few days as we proceed with the conference.